AGRICULTURE

ISRAEL 1954

Agriculture has played a unique and striking role in Israel's history, and in the years of settlement which preceded the Jewish State. It was primarily through land settlement that the Jewish national revival became a firmly based fact, establishing a nation rooted not only in history but also in the soil itself. It was through agricultural settlement also that a people starved of normal contact with the soil for many centuries found their way to recreating a normal social structure.

Through the decades, the land of Israel was a central symbol of the Zionist dream. It is not surprising that modern settlement therefore formally began with the establishment, in 1870, of an Agricultural School at Mikveh Israel, a few miles from Jaffa. Some years later, a number of new agricultural villages were founded: Petach Tikvah—destined to become a thriving town with a rich agricultural hinterland; Rishon-le-Zion, south of Jaffa; Rosh Pinah, in Upper Galilee and Zichron Yaakov at the foot of the Carmel range. By 1899, there were 22 rural settlements in different parts of Palestine, and the national revival had achieved concrete physical and political content.

Statistics, however, tell little of the profound social revolution within the Jewish nation represented by these settlements. In all the years of the dispersion and throughout most of the world, due partly to historic necessity, and partly to discriminatory laws, Jews were driven from the land. They had become a nation of town dwellers. Nonetheless within three generations, a sound and basic Jewish agri-

culture was established, and today's newcomers to agriculture are effecively trained and absorbed in an incredibly short time. Now, over 330,000 Jews, out of a population of 1,480,000, live on the land, and State plans call for an increase of about 400,000 within the next 6 years.

The Establishment of the State

In 1948 a new period of agricultural settlement began. The mass immigration into Israel following the establishment of the State created an immediate demand for increased agricultural production. The Government initiated a fourfold program:

1. the redemption of derelict lands;
2. the preparation and settlement of new agricultural areas;
3. the training of new farmers;
4. the increase of production on all farm lands through intensified agricultural methods and irrigation.

The Expansion of Cultivated Areas

The restoration of neglected areas, and the expansion of cultivated zones were largely problems connected with the very human problem of settlement.

Manpower for an expanded agriculture obviously had to be drawn from the bulk of the new immigrants entering Israel. Most of these immigrants, however, were endowed with neither the training nor apparent inclination towards farming. Only 0.8% of the immigrants listed agriculture as a former occupation. Before any settlements could be established, an educational program, including technical training, had to get underway. The organized veteran settlements, both collective (Kibbutzim) and cooperative (Moshavim), for their part, accepted newcomers for training. In some cases, these newcomers later became permament members enabling the settlement to expand and develop. In some cases, newcomers provided a nucleus for new settlement projects. Here and there, members of veteran settlements volunteered to help in the founding of new settlements by acting as instructors or in actually joining.

The task of persuading the former townsmen (i.e., the vast majority of the new immigrants) to forsake city life for pioneering in their new home was a stubborn one. The results reveal a major achievement of the Government, for 20% of all new immigrants

Arab villagers being trained by Government instructors

are now settled on the land. The Jewish rural population of Israel increased from 110,600 in 1948 to over 330,000 in 1953.

A special contribution to the development was the "Town to Country" movement sponsored by the Government and the General Federation of Labor. By the end of 1953, some 3,000 urban families were drawn to farming in this way, some 500 of these families going to new settlements, the rest joining various existing settlements. A drive to attract another 10,000 families to the land during the next two years has now been initiated; 40% of these prospective farmers are expected to participate in the establishment of new settlements.

The area under cultivation, as a result of these strenuous efforts, increased from 1,650,000 dunams, cultivated in 1948, to 3,550,000 dunams in 1952/1953, and to 3,650,000 in the current year. (1 acre=4 dunams).

New Settlement

The economic and planning problems of new settlement proved no less vital than the purely human aspects. In addition to an urgent need for increased agricultral production, the establishment of the State created the need for radical changes in the distribution of settled areas. Underdeveloped regions like Western Galilee, the Jerusalem Corridor and the Negev had to be developed quickly. In Western Galilee, good arable land was available at once, but in the Jerusalem Corridor and in the Negev enormous preparatory work was necessary before these areas could possibly become productive, and this kind of preparatory work demanded the establishment of settlements on the spot.

Settlement involves the most detailed planning and a vast investment of capital. Roads must be laid, water for domestic use and irrigation assured, and housing for settlers and equipment for farmers must be provided. Soil amelioration must be undertaken and soil preparation problems must be solved. In new areas of agricultural settlement, experimental sowings and plantings were required before any final plans could be formulated. In the first three years of mass settlement 31 new settlements were set up in the once sparsely populated Jerusalem Corridor, 56 in the South and in the Negev. This indicates briefly the scope of the technical problem that had to be tackled successfully.

The increase in the area under cultivation was largely the result of new enterprises. From May, 1948 to September, 1953, 327 new settlements were set up, many more than the total number founded during the previous 60 years of Zionist reconstruction. From October, 1952 to September, 1953, new settlements were farming 120,000 dunams under irrigation, and 735,000 dunams of unirrigated land. They cultivated approximately 37% of unirrigated field crops, 28% of irrigated field crops and 40% of the total area devoted to vegetable production. They held 27% of the country's dairy cows, 20% of the poultry and 30% of the draught animals. Their share in total production was about 25%, their production per unit of land and livestock being somewhat lower than that of older, more firmly established settlements. A host of new settlements are still in the first stages of development, much of their energy still being spent on arduous preparatory work of soil amelioration.

Auxiliary Farms

Much of Israel's agricultural produce is now grown on auxiliary farms established throughout the country, with a total area of

Giant water pipeline to the south →

30,000 dunams. These units consist mostly of up to 2 dunams, and are intended primarily to permit the householder to raise his own food in his spare time. Some 38,300 of such units out of a total of 43,000, were set up in the past six years. In many instances they provided substantial surpluses which went to the general market. The Ministry of Agriculture initiated a persuasive campaign—the "Magen David Yarok," (The Green Star of David)—designed to encourage the production of vegetables, fruit, poultry and eggs on auxiliary farms, in back-yard allotments and "Victory Gardens" and offered special facilities for seed allocation and the distribution of fertilizer.

The Arab Farm

Israel's non-Jewish population (mostly Arab) numbers 179,000 persons of whom 140,000 are directly, or indirectly, employed on the soil. There are some 14,500 Arab-owned farms, excluding the Beduin, whose farming activities represent perhaps another 3,100 units.

Unlike Jewish farmers, the Arabs have farmed for centuries, and for centuries they have followed the same methods. The Arab farm, therefore, did not require the creation of the farmer, but rather the drastic modernization of his techniques.

Ever since the establishment of the State, the Ministry of Agriculture, of course, included this Arab sector in its national considerations, and tremendous efforts were invested in extending the areas of cultivation and in raising crop yields. Instruction was extended to terracing and soil conservation methods in the hill areas, where many Arab farms are situated. New methods of cultivation and care of olive groves, of which the Arabs are the major cultivators, were introduced, and substantially better crops obtained. While prior to 1948 not a single tractor was employed on Arab farms, Arab farmers now use some 50 tractors. The area of Arab farms is part of the national planning area for irrigation and will benefit fully from the development of irrigation projects.

In addition to the normal services of Government instructors and experts available for all farmers, whether Arabs or Jews, the Ministry of Agriculture now employs 18 experts who work exclusively among the Arab population.

Irrigation

Israel's basic agricultural goal is to render the country as nearly self-sufficient as possible. Under prevailing climatic condi-

tions, this can only be accomplished by widespread irrigation. In most areas sufficient rain falls during the winter to irrigate winter and spring crops, but the soil dries rapidly in the hot Mediterranean climate and the winter rains thus go to waste—unless they can be stored in reservoirs or dams. In other areas, abundant underground water is available all year round, while in still other places, springs and rivers provide adequate all year round water supplies. Winter rains must be saved and water brought from abundant perennial sources to summer drought areas. For the purposes of over-all planning, the country's entire water resources are considered as part of the total national development scheme.

Irrigation has progressed rapidly within the past 5 years. Local and regional water works constructed from 1948-53 made it possible to increase Israel's irrigated area from 230,000 dunams in 1948 to 650,000 dunams in 1954; the capacity of waterworks (for all purposes) has risen from some 300 million cubic metres per year in 1948, to 830 million cubic metres per year in 1954. Although the population has grown from about 650,000 to 1,650,000, irrigation per head has soared by more than 100%—from 0.18 dunam to 0.43 dunam (0.37, excluding citrus).

Growth of Production

The planners of agricultural production had a dual task: to ensure an adequate and varied food basket, and at the same time, to eliminate the need for food imports paid for in foreign currency. Over half Israel's food consumption, considered in terms of money, originates from local agriculture, the value of local produce being calculated at world market prices. This includes nearly 100% of the vitamin intake required, now supplied in locally-grown fruit and vegetables, 50% of proteins, but only 27% of the total calory consummption, since wheat and sugar are still imported. Sugar imports will end within a few years, and with the increase of natural pasturage, the percentage of locally grown, protein rich meat will also improve substantially. Although wheat imports were reduced, there is no immediate prospect of self-sufficiency in wheat production.

Since not all crops can be grown successfully, Government policy is aimed at producing enough of these crops which flourish in Israel so that an exportable surplus will remain. At the same time the public will be accustomed to a diet based more upon the realities of local production. Foreign currency earned with exportable surpluses will, of course, help cover the expenditure for essential imports.

Agricultural branches based primarily on imported commodities —such as intensive poultry and dairy farming—have been restricted, and other branches proportionally expanded.

By September, 1953, the total area under cultivation amounted to 3,550,000 dunams, of which almost 600,000 dunams were under irrigation. The total value of agricultural production in 1952, calculated at (1948-1949) constant prices, was $96,000,000 of which $62,000,000 was for food, $15,000,000 for fodder and grains, and the rest, $19,000,000, represented the value of agricultural exports, including citrus.

Area Under Cultivation

The cultivated area was divided as follows:

	1948-49 *Dunams*	1952-53 *Dunams*	1953-54 (*Provisional estimates*) *Dunams*
Field crops	1,066,000	2,549,000	2,450,000
Fodder & other irrigated crops	65,000	165,000	260,000
Vegetables, potatoes & groundnuts	69,000	244,000	300,000
Fruit plantations	355,000	433,000	475,000
Fish ponds	15,000	35,000	35,000
Miscellaneous	80,000	124,000	130,000
Total area cultivated	1,650,000	3,550,000	3,650,000
Total area irrigated	290,000	600,000	800,000

Production of Main Crops

	1949-50	1952-53
Wheat	27,000 tons	29,500 tons
Barley and oats	38,300 "	66,000 "
Hay	53,200 "	110,000 "
Fodder	495,000 "	640,000 "
Pulses	2,300 "	3,700 "
Oil seeds	4,250 "	9,000 "
Tobacco	1,500 "	1,800 "
Potatoes	35,000 "	55,000 "
Vegetables	125,000 "	205,000 "
Citrus	6,267,600 cases	8,970,000 cases
Table grapes	9,500 tons	12,500 tons
Wine grapes	7,400 "	9,500 "
Bananas	2,000 "	11,000 "
Olives	3,800 "	13,500 "
Fisheries	4,000 "	3,100 "
Fish ponds	2,900 "	4,600 "
Cow milk	93,000,000 litres	128,000,000 litres
Sheep milk	13,000,000 "	21,000,000 "
Eggs	330,000,000 eggs	370,000,000 eggs
Honey	420 tons	700 tons

Flax harvest in the Judean plain

Industrial Crops

Greater emphasis is being placed on the production of industrial crops, both as a means of saving and earning foreign currency, and in order to provide local industry with raw materials available locally. In most cases of fibre crops—cotton, flax, ramic, agave, and "Kenaf" —cultivation is still in its experimental stages, and the results are promising. A Californian variety of cotton, for instance, has given yields equal to those obtained in California, and, as a result, the area devoted to this crop is now being extended. A successful flax planting led to the establishment of a pilot-plant for processing fibres. "Kenaf," as a substitute for jute, has also shown good results in experimental plantings. The Ministry of Agriculture has experimented with the possible utilization of certain indigenous plants for industrial purposes. A vivid example is the planting of an experimental area in the Araba region of the Southern Negev with the indigenous Juncus plant which seems to thrive in saline

soil. Should this experiment prove completely successful, it will provide the local paper industry with valuable currency-saving raw materials, and permit agricultural development in a territory where most cultivation is impossible due to excessive salinity. Three major industrial crops, already beyond the stage of experimentation, are assuming increasing importance—sugar beets, oil crops and tobacco.

Sugar beets—6,200 dunams of sugar beets were planted last year, of which 4,300 dunams were irrigated. The crop was used to produce alcohol and resulted in a saving of some $300,000 in foreign currency. Two factories for the processing of beets into sugar are being constructed, and with their completion, more than ten times the area now devoted to this crop will be needed. It is expected that within 5 years Israel will be self-sufficient in sugar production. Her present annual consumption of sugar comes to about 40,000 tons.

Oil Crops—The most significant oil crop grown is the groundnut. Plans for the current year envisage the trebling of the 21,500 dunams now devoted to this crop. Other oil seed crops for the production

Harvest in the Northern Negev

of edible oils are sunflower, sesame and flax, the last being grown experimentally for oil production.

Tobacco—The bulk of the tobacco growing area is devoted to the oriental type in which production keeps ahead of consumption. The growing of Virginia-type tobacco has decreased following a lessening demand caused by the progressive rise in the price of Virginia cigarettes. The tobacco crop not only saves foreign exchange but it brings in considerable revenue from excise duties. There is also a possibility that Israel may export tobacco in the not too distant future.

Field Crops

While Israel cannot, at the present, hope to attain self-sufficiency in the production of wheat for bread, those areas devoted to wheat crops will be increased. Maize, under irrigation, is also to be produced for bread making as a partial substitute for imported wheat.

The areas devoted to the growing of other cereal crops—barley, oats and sorghum, etc.—have been considerably increased, and the goal of supplying at least all local requirements in fodder and grains for livestock will soon be realized. There is enough green fodder for livestock already and about 70% of fodder grains come from locally-grown grains.

The nation is now quite self-sufficient in vegetables, and the attention of vegetable growers is being directed to supplying surpluses to the canning industry, both for local requirements and for export.

Citrus

Citrus is the most important of Israel's fruit crops. It is also the country's largest single export item, the famous "Jaffa" orange being in constant demand in Europe. The total citrus area is now approximately 138,000 dunams, although not all bear fully yet. The planting of new groves will be increased annually, and an additional 100,000 dunams of citrus groves are aimed for within the next decade. The citrus growing industry is being increasingly mechanized to speed up and improve picking and packing. Citrus exports, in the winter of 1952-1953, reached 5,300,000 cases and 3,700 tons of various citrus by-products, juices and concentrates. During the current season exports are expected to reach over 7,000,000 cases.

Fruit Growing

Israel's great climate variation, with its Mediterranean seaboard, cool hill country and hot sub-tropical climate in the Jordan valley

and the Negev, encourages the growth of a great variety of fruits, and ensures a steady supply of fruit throughout the year. In addition to citrus, olives, vines and figs, plantings of many deciduous fruits, such as plums and apples, have been undertaken successfully and their production areas extended. Experiments have been made also with the cultivation of other fruits, particularly tropical varieties like avocado pears, and early successes led to a rapid extension of plantings. These fruits could become valuable export items. During the past year, the areas devoted to grapes have been greatly extended—from 27,500 and 51,000 dunams of wine and table grapes respectively, to 65,000 and 91,000 dunams respectively. Both wine and raisins will eventually become important export items. Banana plantations have been expanded from 8,800 dunams to 11,000 dunams, and the export demand for this fruit is satisfactory. Plans call for further expansion of banana plantations up to 15,000 dunams.

An important and interesting project recently undertaken is the expansion of carob plantations to supply animal fodder and eventually to permit livestock expansion.

Livestock

Cattle

Until this year, cattle was raised in Israel mainly for milk. The number of thoroughbred dairy cattle rose from 32,450 head in 1947, to 80,100 head in 1953, while the quantity of milk produced rose during this period from 78 million litres to 128 million litres.

Mass immigration during the past five years resulted in a startling increase in the demand for milk, and in order to keep pace, some 15,000 head of cattle were imported in 1949-50. Milk is now produced in sufficient quantities to cover local needs.

This year a start was made in the breeding of cattle for beef production. Vigorous efforts are being made to develop natural pastures in the South and in the Negev, and beef cattle, mostly Herefords, were imported to form the nucleus of future herds. At present these herds are still experimental. In addition, the dairy farmer's practice of slaughtering bull calves a few days after birth is being discontinued and calves will be raised to maturity. This alone may give an annual herd of at least 10,000 head of cattle for beef.

Sheep and Goats

Israel's sheep flocks number 85,000 head. Until recently sheep were kept primarily for milk and wool, but new breeds, notably

Corriedales, have now been imported to utilize newly-developed pasture lands and to produce mutton and wool.

The goat herds total 108,000, mostly local breeds, whose capacity for damage is in reverse proportion to their usefulness. The Government therefore decided to replace these with sheep and with domestic goats, where possible, of the Zaanen breed, of which 28,000 are already in the country. The rate of replacement is somewhat slow, since the majority of the goats are owned by Arabs.

Good milch goats are an important asset to auxiliary farms, and to immigrant settlements where the possibilities for developing dairies are limited by inadequate irrigation.

A "pedigree book" for male and female goats is now kept, so that the general standards of this branch can be raised.

Soil Conservation

After centuries of disregard this land, once reputed "flowing with milk and honey," has become eroded; large tracts become barren; good top soil was washed away year after year by winter rains rushing down bare slopes.

To help revive Israel's waste lands and to improve land already cultivated, the Government Soil Conservation Department carried out a land utilization survey, mapping an area of over 9,500,000 dunams, from the most northerly point of the country, Metulla, to the 60th coordinate south of Beersheba. It mapped and defined general grades of land for exploitation, dividing the area as follows:

3,395,550	dunams	— suitable for all types of cultivation under varying conditions of soil conservation.
697,540	"	— suitable for plantations.
3,317,800	"	— suitable for pasture. (Of this area, some 841,720 dunams can be upgraded after soil betterment, and 1,118,990 dunams in the Northern Negev can also be upgraded when irrigation becomes possible).
882,500	"	— suitable for afforestation.
503,960	"	— unfit for any type of cultivation, deteriorated lands, sand dunes and fishponds.

This survey will enable the most economic and advantageous exploitation of all areas, and supply the basic information for the formulation of Israel's final agricultural plan. It also provides all the information necessary to implement far-reaching and permanent

soil conservation projects, which will prevent further erosion and soil deterioration, and provide for all-round amelioration.

In the meantime, soil conservation measures are implemented as local, rather than national, projects. Terraces are built on hillsides, waterways and diversion ditches are being dug to guide the water, contour ploughing has been introduced, regrassing has been started and irrigation systems planned. This year, the area of natural pasturage created as a result of regrassing will reach 125,000 dunams.

Irrigation is also being tackled as a problem of soil conservation, apart from its direct farming uses. Levelled border irrigation is being studied and has already been introduced extensively in suitable areas, saving imported pipes, sprinklers and other equipment and, at the same time, preventing erosion. On hillside fields, contour ploughing has been made compulsory, while in valleys, small dams are being built to conserve winter storm water and hold back the savage rush of waters which have till now carried thousands of tons of good soil down to the sea. Six such dams have been built so far and more are planned.

Fisheries

Fish constitutes a valuable part of the Israel diet and serves as a protein source in lieu of meat. Fisheries in Israel are divided into several branches: sea fishing (trawler, coastal, surface water), lake fishing and pond fishing. Sea fishing is largely dependent on equipment available and on the training of professional fishermen. The Israel fishing fleet has doubled since the creation of the State, and its crews have acquired professional competence. The main fishing regions lie along the eastern coast of the Mediterranean and in Elat Bay in the Red Sea. The principal species found is the Triton (sardine). Efforts are being made, however, to operate in more distant grounds.

Lake fishing—in the Sea of Galilee and Huleh—continues to expand. Fish have been introduced into artificial lakes (reservoirs) formed through the construction of dams. Harbors for fishing vessels are being expanded in order to relieve the pressure on the Port of Haifa. There are some 35 thousand dunams of fish ponds, mainly for carp breeding, in the coastal regions and in the valleys. This branch requires extensive research on feeding, fertilization and the control of disease and pests—all being pursued by the Fisheries Research Station.

Afforestation

In many parts of Israel, the face of the land has already been changed by large-scale afforestation. Under the national tree-planting plan, 15 million saplings were planted in the past six years from shoots raised in a special nursery.

The program calls for the speedy afforestation of bare hill country, unsuitable for other forms of agriculture; the planting of trees in sand dune areas to fix sand and permit the eventual growth of woods there; and the use of tree avenues, in the Negev, to act as wind-breaks. A total area of 560,000 dunams was reserved for afforestation purposes, and 50,000 dunams of these have already been planted.

Mechanization

In order to achieve rapid extension of the area under cultivation and thus increase food production, Israel was compelled to introduce relatively vast quantities of agriculturla machinery and equipment. The increase in agricultural machinery in use on farms can be seen from the following table:

	Tractors	*Combines*	*Drills*	*Balers*
1948	681	261	237	173
1952	3,133	783	759	563
1953	3,500	820	850	600

Summary

Within six years, Israel has made gigantic strides in increasing its agricultural production, despite sometimes overwhelming difficulties. Not only have established branches been expanded and consolidated but experimentation in all possible fields was keenly pursued and encouraged.

The Ministry of Agriculture faces two major problems—the provision of adequate food supplies for a growing population and the reduction of foreign currency expenditure on imported foodstuffs. The plan for agricultural expansion is inextricably linked to these two objectives, and all experimentation takes these into account. Israel's climatic advantages, which permit the production of fruit, vegetables and flowers far earlier than in nearby Europe, are being

exploited through trial exports. Trial consignments of early vegetables and fruits, as well as canned foods, have been shipped to various European markets. Even flowers and flower bulbs have been exported, though in small quantities, and this export may yet achieve commercially significant dimensions. Experimentation in the raising of crops likely to save foreign currency (i.e., coffee, cotton, sugar beet, as well as of crops which have assured export possibilities, groundnuts, etc.) continues. The citrus branch, as befits a major agricultural export, expands constantly.

Planning for the Future

Today, with over 3,500,000 dunams under cultivation, Israel is already exploiting most of her immediately available arable land. Her recent aim of expanding cultivated areas has been achieved. Her future aim is embodied in the succinct slogan, "More crops per dunam."

A seven-year plan of development and production as the first stage in the State's agricultural planning was drawn up by the Joint Planning Council of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Settlement Department of the Jewish Agency. The scope of proposed development, which presumes a population increase to 2,000,000 at the end of the seven-year period, can best be grasped when compared with the situation in 1952-1953, shown in the following comparative tables:

Table I

Scope of Proposed Development

	Unit	1952	1959-60
Population	No.	1,629,000	2,000,000
Farms	"	42,400	83,646
Total cultivated area	Dunam	3,583,000	3,650,000
Irrigated area	"	600,000	1,854,000
Unirrigated area	"	2,983,000	1,796,000
Natural grazing, after amelioration	"		500,000

These figures show a slight increase in the cultivated area, but a colossal increase in irrigated land from 16.4% to 51.8% of the total area being farmed.

Table II

Irrigated Area and Quantity of Water

	1952-53	1959-60	Per Person 1952-53 (*Population* 1,650,000)	Per Person 1959-60 (*Population* 2,000,000)
Thousands of dunams of irrigated land	600	1,850	0.363	0.925
Quantity of water in cu. m.	550 Mill.	1,300 Mill.	333	650

The quantity of water will increase 2½ times, the irrigated area three times.

Table III

Planned Increase in Agricultural Production

Agricultural Production	1952	1959-60
Total value of production based on	*In Millions of Dollars*	
world prices in 1952-53:	96	225.2
The increase in real value is $129.2 m. or 134%.		
The breakdown of this total is as follows:		
Food for human consumption	62	148.6
Fodder	15	25.9
Export of citrus fruits	19	39.5
Export of miscellaneous		11.2
In comparison with 1952, local agricultural production in 1959-60 will supply each person daily:		
Calories consumed	207	1,850

The Agricultural Balance Sheet

As is seen in Table III above, total agricultural production is expected to reach a value of $225,200,000 by 1960. Of this, $50,700,000 worth of agricultural products are earmarked for export, as follows:

Table IV

Value of Agricultural Exports

Commodity	*Quantity*	*Price of ton or case in $*	*Equivalent in Million $*
Citrus	11,300,000 cases	3.5	39.5
Bananas	15,000 tons	160.0	2.4
Raisins and Wine	12,500 "	—	1.6
Sub-tropical fruits and miscellaneous	5,000 "	200.0	1.0
Vegetables	40,000 "	90.0	3.6
Olive Oil	2,000 "	800.0	1.6
Tobacco, honey, etc.	2,000 "	600.0	1.2
			50.9

The annual cost in foreign currency, if this overall production is to be obtained, including amortization and interest, will be $53,050,000, which, after deducting the value of expected agricultural exports, leaves an annual deficit of $2,350,000.

Israel, however, will continue to import certain foodstuffs—wheat, tea, coffee, etc.—and these imports will cost $16,800,000 per year at current prices, even after the rest of the agricultural expansion program mentioned has been attained. The cost of these imports, plus the above mentioned deficit in production costs, gives a total annual deficit of $19,150,000 on the agricultural balance sheet, as compared with the present annual deficit of $80,000,000.

The seven-year agricultural plan aims at achieving maximum self-sufficiency in food production and in the production of industrial raw materials so that Israel may be freed from dependence on imports. The plan is based on available land and water resources, and on the need for providing farmers with a decent standard of living. It intends to harness the best possible scientific and technical equipment and technique and to carefully and rationally exploit the country's precious land and water in order to preserve and enrich her natural wealth. The seven-year plan is not the last word in Israel's agricultural planning but when its objectives are realized, and the $80,000,000 deficit is reduced to $19,150,000, Israel agriculture will have achieved a historic and astonishing place for itself in the annals of man's technical and social planning.

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